



News from Congressman Tom Lantos

**12th Congressional District of California
San Mateo/San Francisco**

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LANTOS INTRODUCES YOUTH WORKER PROTECTION ACT TO IMPROVE JOB SAFETY, ENSURE TEENS' EDUCATION

Washington, DC – Congressman Tom Lantos (D-California) today introduced a bill to provide a much-needed reform to outdated U.S. child labor law. The Youth Worker Protection Act (H.R. 3193), also known as the YWPA, would strengthen legal protections for young workers while placing common-sense restrictions on the type of work available to them, as well as limiting the hours during the school year that teens can be required to work.

“The exploitation of child labor cannot be tolerated in America,” Lantos said. “It is not a thing of the past but a very real problem that continues to jeopardize the health, education and lives of many of our nation’s youth workers. The YWPA seeks to eliminate the exploitation of teen workers, who often labor late into the night while school is in session, and under hazardous conditions.”

The new legislation establishes tougher penalties for willful violations of child labor law that result in serious injury or the death of a child. While keeping the family farm exemptions that have been in effect under the Fair Labor Standards Act since its inception, the YWPA ensures that all other agricultural jobs meet the same safety standards as non-agricultural jobs.

“It is shocking that the occupational injury rate for children and teens in this country is more than twice the adult rate,” Lantos said. “Even more astonishing is the fact that a young person is killed on the job in this country once every five days, and according to the most recent statistics provided the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) an average of 230,000 youth workers are injured on the job each year.”

The bill will also reduce the problems of children working long hours when school is in session by strengthening the existing limitations on the number of hours children under 18 years of age can work on school days.

The YWPA has been co-sponsored so far by 30 members of Congress and endorsed by the AFL-CIO, the Child Labor Coalition, the NEA, the National Consumer League, the International Initiative to End Child Labor, the Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW) and United Methodist Women.